

**F3 Stakeholders Group Meeting
Tuesday, August 28, 2001
6:30 PM – 9:30 PM**

GROUP MEMORY

Revisiting discussion regarding “system of care”:

- System of care – look at strengths in community; use strengths; not starting from scratch, but fill gaps.
- How will discussion last time be addressed in conveners group?
- At recent conveners group meeting, there was a realization the conveners may not understand what stakeholders are for and what they are doing, in spite of the fact that conveners get all of the mailings/group memories from the stakeholders work.
- Conveners accepted process, but it’s harder to operationalize.
- The good discussions here need to get to the conveners; those here that are part of the conveners group should take them back to the group.
- It is important because stakeholders are on the front line.
- Some agencies have different people here than at conveners meeting.
- Conveners have also committed a lot of time, but they are still at an earlier stage of development in the collaborative framework than stakeholders, who have made much more progress.
- Is the process working when decisions are being made (externally?) in the meantime?
- We need to be transparent; if decisions are not in accord with stakeholders’ views, we need to raise concerns.
- Important for conveners and stakeholders to coordinate; want to pay attention to impact of decisions that may harm families; example – governor/legislature taking money away from youth services to put into adult services; what’s the process for action and systemic change?
- Put the original question on the agenda for later to decide how to address concerns.

Discussion – What is culture?

- National Center for Cultural Competency definition: “Roles, relationships, and expected behaviors of a racial, ethnic, religious, or social group and the ability to transmit the above to succeeding generations.”
- “An integrated pattern of human behavior that includes thoughts, communication, languages, practices, beliefs, values, customs, courtesies, rituals, manners of interacting and roles...”
- Linguistic family; family-like relationships, class...
- From “Assets for Colorado Youth” – awareness no longer sufficient; need to embrace in order to move forward to competence.
- Behavior and a process.
- Legal mandate – appropriate/inappropriate relative to translation services; Title 6 of Civil Rights Act mandates.
- Hearing impairment represents a culture, cultures;
- Ability to relate communally.
- Class.
- Who they surround themselves with.

- Gender, age, ability, geographic, sexual orientation, politics...
- A shared experience?
- Differences and shared areas.
- Power/authority – dominance and submission, etc.; and actions and behaviors related to beliefs and preservation of status.
- Sensitivity.
- More than nationality.
- Aesthetics – sense of beauty and expression through behavior; nonverbal, posture.
- Time and place – newcomers and old timers.
- Time orientation – how time is conceptualized.
- Written versus oral histories.
- Issues of power – leadership, authority.
- Matriarchal versus patriarchal.
- Role of children, parenting.
- Institutional and systemic.

What is competence?

- Sensitivity.
- Bicultural, bilingual.
- Cross-cultural mix.
- Honoring.
- Recognize, appreciate, learn from what is/is not in accord/familiar.
- Respect – striving to understand.
- Avoiding assumptions.
- Value uniqueness.
- Educate.
- Expose children to unfamiliar traditions.
- Education, intellectual strategies.
- Special powers/attributes assigned to certain community members (voodoo, shaman, magician...).
- What's broken, well-ness, disease, taboos.
- Dietary differences.
- Not the things themselves but how they interrelate and how they are conceptualized.
- Subculture important.
- You can apply all of these to anyone.
- Rituals – coming of age; celebrations, rights of passage.
- Marriage, age, relationship.
- Property ownership – common versus personal.
- Traditions.
- Cumulative effect of experiences – shared experiences.
- Impact of change – not inert; and response to change; how unit draws on resources.
- What seems to not be in accord with what is familiar; what is *in* accord/familiar.
- What is shared, transmitted.
- Personal power, fate, responsibility.
- Youth, age, personal choices.

- Subsuming many characteristics.
- To what you identify.
- Fluidity – through life experiences and how people pass through/experience those stages.
- Foster acceptance through opportunities.
- Avoiding “melting pot” concept and the assumption of its validity.
- Preserving and honoring heritage.
- Difficulty – trying to define.
- Forest with different trees.

What is cultural competence?

- Knowledge, skills and attitudes.
- And act on them thru adaptation.
- Just having it isn’t enough – you have to do something and change your behavior.
- Respect doesn’t mean agreement.
- Knowing what you don’t know and understanding its impact and being willing to act on that understanding.
- Openness – willing.
- More than awareness – behavior – seeking out, proactive effort to gain competence.
- Appreciation, suspend assumptions.
- Deliberate consciousness.
- Being a transparent, non-defensive approach; unguarded.
- Willing to be proactive.
- Knowing incompetence is unacceptable because it creates barriers, harm, conflict, negative consequences to people and relationships.
- Digging deeper; look below the surface of translated brochures.
- Accepting reality of attitudes and their impact.
- Accepting yourself on a learning curve.
- Not equating difference with badness.
- The work is in me to look inside, accept where I am, and seek ways to move on the learning curve; look for learning opportunities/experiences – to learn what I don’t even know to ask.
- It’s not about being competent about a culture.
- Not just teaching things, but integrating/fostering the desire to know what you don’t know; it’s a process.
- Knowing you aren’t going to understand.
- Accepting.
- Competence – appropriate knowledge and skills; who not to ask as well as who to turn to.
- Accept others’ perspectives of how I am having impact – taking risk.
- It’s absurd to think we can be culturally competent – there is no end.
- What on earth is “our” culture?
- Knowing the limitations of our assumptions.
- It may not be culture – don’t assume my definitions are yours.

Why is cultural competence important to the system of care?

- Without it, participants will resist help – personal sabotage, secrets not shared, control, closed.

- Triumphs not shared.
- Integrated-ness, shared-ness = system of care.
- Importance of integration of personal culture into relationship.
- Service will suffer if approach is incompetent; blocks best practices.
- Denial of treatment, decisions inappropriate.
- Alienation, avoidance of service; distance, disconnect, hopelessness, no relationship.
- Violent reaction to non-responsive system; rage, anger, intensity.
- Righteous dominant culture results – keeps dominant culture feeling right.
- Disrespect engenders disengagement.
- In mental health and substance abuse, so many boiler plate approaches that don't allow for differences; rigid provision of services – justifies continuing righteousness and perpetuating failure.

What are the implications for achieving a system of care that is culturally competent?

- Makes system's culture understandable and navigable.
- Broad menu of solutions and approaches.
- Cultural issue for justice system is to find out what is in youth's culture – cultural significance – that is the corrective behavior or environment the youth most responds to; parents may not even know they can tell judge; judiciary doesn't have this information.
 - Can't do it by ourselves; need help.
 - May then find out that proper treatment is not available in youth's language.
 - Not going to be all things to all, but can be open.
- Competency – connecting to where people are.
- Doesn't leave people clueless.
- Competence fosters competency.
- Assessment needs – what does *this* child need?
- Flexibility – can use new approaches if gaps exist.
- Different feelings...lack of blame; safety; trust; dare to take risks; relief; freeing.
- Fosters sense of respect – if accepted and safe, more willing to go back and encourage others to get that help.
- Energy; creates momentum, mobilizing.
- Logistics of business = provide all things, creates narrow culture, not able to provide all.
- Imposition of culture without competency; having it is like a sigh of relief, release of burden.
- Need to take the time to learn and be able to say, "I don't have all the answers." Not "You change" to get services.
- Some limits – some imposition necessary; e.g. physical discipline practices that exceed local standards; there are limits.
- Need to balance regard for legal/ethical limitations/parameters with cultural reference point; we don't do this at all costs; need to recognize certain parameters and acknowledge the differences while maintaining standards.
- Education goes both ways – we are educating and being educated.
- Cultural competence allows you to say, "You are not a bad person."
- Funding issues – education regarding American laws and culture needs to go beyond initial orientation; need follow up.

- Money may limit, but the openness can help compensate by being culturally competent – competency is a good investment/cost effective.
- Understanding it means integrating cultural competency into everything we do and we provide services and develop them.
- Cultural competency is not a separate “program” – it’s not a destination, it’s a journey.
- It’s not an outcome, an end point; it’s a quality.
- Need balance in system of care between accountability and flexibility to go outside the box, and individuality; e.g. – sometimes can’t follow standards and provide best care; maybe add standards that provide for justification when can’t comply; e.g. – counseling ordered for Vietnamese youth, where its difficult because not appropriate – expected to keep things inside; therapy ‘unsuccessful’ because youth doesn’t answer questions; meet the required time in counseling but it’s a waste of time; loss of face in some families is enough to commit suicide; don’t confuse bilingual competence with appropriate treatment in the cultural context.
- Standards have to have a cultural reference point.

Announcements:

- Federal site visit in second week of October.
- Later in fall, separate MACRO site visit.